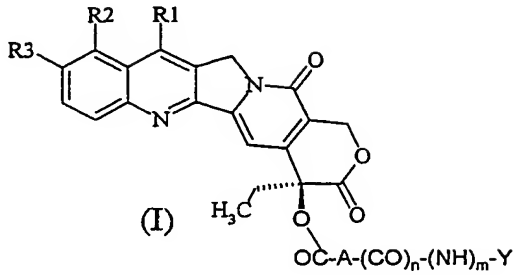
CLAIMS

1. Formula (I) compounds



where:

A is saturated or unsaturated straight or branched C_1-C_8 alkyl, C_3-C_{10} cycloalkyl, straight or branched C_3-C_{10} cycloalkyl-C_1-C_8 alkyl;

when n and m are equal to 1, then Y is saturated or unsaturated straight or branched C_1-C_8 alkyl substituted with $NR_{12}R_{13}$ or $N^+R_{12}R_{13}R_{14}$, where R_{12}, R_{13} and R_{14}, which can be the same or different, are hydrogen or straight or branched C_1-C_4 alkyl, or Y is BCOOX, where B is a residue of an amino acid, X is H, straight or branched C_1-C_4 alkyl, benzyl or phenyl, substituted in the available positions with at least one group selected from C_1-C_4 alkoxy, halogen, nitro, amino, C_1-C_4 alkyl, or,

if n and m are both 0; Y is 4-trimethylammonium-3-hydroxybutanoyl, both in the form of inner salt and in the form of a salt with an anion of a pharmaceutically acceptable acid, or Y is $N^+R_{12}R_{13}R_{14}$, as defined above;

R_1 is hydrogen or a $-C(R_5)=N-O-R_4$ group, in which R_4 is hydrogen or a straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl or C_1-C_5 alkenyl group, or a C_3-C_{10} cycloalkyl group, or a straight or branched (C_3-C_{10}) cycloalkyl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, or a C_6-C_{14} aryl group, or a straight or branched (C_6-C_{14}) aryl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, or a heterocyclic group or a straight or branched heterocyclo - (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, said heterocyclic group containing at least one heteroatom selected from an atom of nitrogen, optionally substituted with a (C_1-C_5) alkyl group, and/or an atom of oxygen and/or of sulphur; said alkyl, alkenyl, cycloalkyl, cycloalkylalkyl, aryl, aryl-alkyl, heterocyclic or heterocyclo-alkyl

groups may optionally be substituted with one or more groups selected from: halogen, hydroxy, C_1-C_5 alkyl, C_1-C_5 alkoxy, phenyl, cyano, nitro, -NR_6R_7, where R_6 and R_7, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, straight or branched (C_1-C_5) alkyl, the –COOH group or one of its pharmaceutically acceptable esters; or the –$CONR_8R_9$ group, where R_8 and R_9, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, straight or branched (C_1-C_5) alkyl; or R_4 is a (C_6-C_{10}) aroyl or (C_6-C_{10}) arylsulphonyl residue, optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from: halogen, hydroxy, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkoxy, phenyl, cyano, nitro, -$NR_{10}R_{11}$, where R_{10} and R_{11}, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl; or R_4 is a polyaminoalkyl residue; or R_4 is a glycosyl residue; R_5 is hydrogen, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkyl, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkenyl, C_3-C_{10} cycloalkyl, straight or branched (C_3-C_{10}) cycloalkyl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl, C_6-C_{14} aryl, straight or branched (C_6-C_{14}) aryl - (C_1-C_5) alkyl; R_2 and R_3, which may be the same or different, are hydrogen, hydroxyl, straight or branched C_1-C_5 alkoxy; the N1-oxides, the racemic mixtures, their individual enantiomers, their individual diastereoisomers, their mixtures, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts.

2. Compounds according to claim 1, in which, in formula (I), n and m are 1.

3. Compounds according to claim 1, in which, in formula (I), n and m are 0.

4. Compounds according to claim 1, selected from the group consisting of:
(E)-7-tert-butoxyiminomethyl-20-O-(4-trimethyl-ammonium-3-hydroxy)butanoyl-camptothecin bromide;
(E)-7-tert-butoxyiminomethyl-20-O-(4-trimethyl-ammonium)butanoyl-camptothecin bromide;
(E)-7-tert-butoxyiminomethyl-20-O-hemisuccinyl-camptothecin;
(E)-7-tert-butoxyiminomethyl-20-O-[2-(dimethylamino)

ethylamino]succinylcamptothecin hydrochloride;
20-O-(benzylglicyl)succinyl-camptothecin;
20-O-(terbutylglycyl)succinyl-camptothecin bromide;
7-ter-butoxyiminomethyl-20-O-(terbutylglycyl)succinyl-camptothecin;
20-O-(glycyl)succinyl-camptothecin;
20-O-(2-methoxyphenylglycyl)succinyl-camptothecin;
7-ter-butoxyiminomethyl-20-O-(2-methoxy-phenylglycyl) succinyl-camptothecin.

5. Process for the preparation of compounds according to claim 1, where n and m are 0, comprising:

a) reaction of the camptothecin, optionally substituted with the R_1, R_2 and R_3 groups defined above, with a carboxylic acid bearing a leaving group in ω to obtain the respective ester in position 20;

b) substitution of said leaving group with the Y group.

6. Process for the preparation of compounds according to claim 1, where n and m are 1, comprising:

a) reaction of the camptothecin, optionally substituted with the R_1, R_2 and R_3 groups defined above, with a carboxylic acid with 3 to 11 carbon atoms, to obtain the respective hemiester in position 20;

b) transformation of the free carboxylic group of said hemiester to the respective amide -NH-Y.

7. Compounds according to any of claims 1-4, as medicaments.

8. Pharmaceutical composition containing a therapeutically effective amount of at least one compound according to claims 1-4, in admixture with pharmaceutically acceptable vehicles and excipients.

9. Pharmaceutical composition containing a therapeutically effective amount of at least one compound according to claims 1-4, in admixture with pharmaceutically acceptable vehicles and excipients and optionally in combination with another active ingredient.

10. Pharmaceutical composition according to claim 9, in which the other active ingredient is an anticancer agent.

11. Use of a compound according to claims 1-4, for the preparation of a medicament endowed with topoisomerase I inhibiting activity.

12. Use according to claim 11, for the preparation of a medicament useful for the treatment of tumours.

13. Use according to claim 11, for the preparation of a medicament useful for the treatment of parasitic or viral infections.